# PRIMITIVE

A MAGAZINE OF AMERICAN FOLK LORE

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AMERICAN SQUARE DANCE GROUP
MARGOT MAYO
LEADER

# 'PROMENADE

Official organ of the American Square Dance Group

"The purpose of the American Square Dance Group is to make available those rich stores of native dance, music, drama and general Americana which together comprise American Folk Culture; to conduct such activities without regard for race, creed, color or social position; to cooperate with those who hold similar view."

A.S.D.G . Constitution

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## PICK UP YOUR HEELS, MANNY...

There are so many things which are important to each of us, moments of intense pleasure such as listening to Bach, Sibelius or Beehtoven. Moments of shivering suspense like the preview of the World's Fair on that cold dark May day so many eons ago. Amusing and silly moments, yes, even fiascos, shared. A successful Open House, or a good demonstration. Or the awful, sharp-cut sadness of an impending separation.

I assigned this goodbye note to two other members of the Group because I dreaded attempting to put into words all that Manny means to us; but somehow they just didn't have time to write this letter and so it falls back again on me.

This month has meant parting from one of the most outstanding members of our Group, Manny Weiner. He has been our chief caller, our man-of-all-importance for several years, until we have come to depend on him as our mainstay. But this is something bigger than we, something bigger than Open Houses and demonstrations, which er must face along with all the millions of other folks who are fighting this war.

Remember those night-rides home on the milk train, Manny, after an out of town demonstration? Remember the recording sessions at Decca, when we made those four albums? Remember all the demonstrations and Open Houses and the wall paintings of our studio? We know you remember, for your last letter said, "I miss those darned square dances... When you are in town they don't mean so much, for you are always sure you can find some dance to attend, but here..., darnit, you know you are stuck."

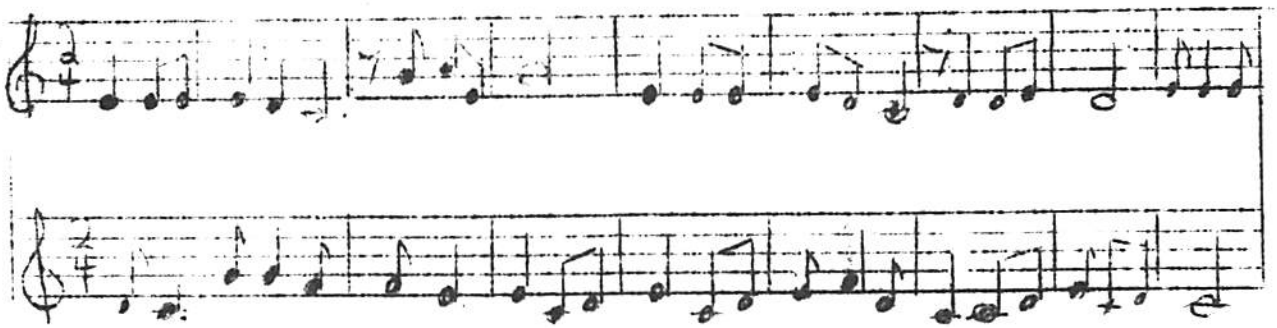
Well, Manny, let's get it over with and come home and get going again! You know how we feel, how much we care for you... there's no use trying to put it into words. Thanks for all you've done for us, for being, well, for being Manny. Hurry home and we'll have "Cotton-eyed Joe" and "John Henry" all polished up and a-rarin' to break loose on the nearest piano.

Margot

# HENRY

This unusally complete and coherent version of Lord Randall (Child Ballad number 16) is from Manhattan a section in which English ballads and the like rarely occur. My mother learnd it on the lower East Side when rather young, but doesn't remember who taught it to her. The original plot (what there is of it) is slightly altered, but the tune is very different from the original. There are many versions and variants of Lord Randall still being sung in the United States.

Walter Lehrman



Where have you been all day, Henry my son ?
Where have you been all day, my loving one?
I've been to sister's, I've been to sister's.
Make my bed for the pain in my side, for I want to lie down.

What did sister give you, Henry my son ?
What did sister give you, my loving one?
She gave me poison, she gave me poison
Make my bed for the pain in my side, for I want to lie down.

What will you leave for father, Henry my son ?
What will you leave for father, my llving one?
Gold and silver, gold and silver
Make my bed for the pain in my side, for I want to lie down.

What will you leave for mother, Henry my son?
What will you leave for mother my loving one?
Silks and Satins, Silks and satins.
Make my bed for the pain in my side, for I want to lie down.

What will you leave for brother, Henry my son
What will you leave for brother, my loving one?
A watch and a chain, a watch and a chain.
Make my bed for the pain in my side, for I want to lie down.

What will you leave for baby , Henry my son ?
What will you leave for baby, my loving one?
A kiss from Heaven, a kiss from Heaven.
Make my bed for the pain in my side, for I want to lie down.

What will you leave for sister, Henry my son?
What will you leave for sister, my loving one?
A rope to hang her, a rope to hang her.
Make my bed for the pain in my side, for I want to lie down.

# IT STARTED THIS WAY

The other night a member of the American Square Dance Group asked me how I ever started calling square dances. Then I started to think. I don't think very often so you can see it was quite a task to remember where and when and under what circumstances I happened to fall into the category of a square dance caller.

Like any other normal boy of sixteen or seventeen I got the itch to get out on a dance floor. So, when Saturday night rolled around the "gang" would pile into the jaloppy and away we would go. At first we didn't go any great distance. There were square dances in the nearby towns and good ones too! There was Foxon Grange, Lovedays, North Haven, Roselhurst Farms, Merdin Grange, Bradley's Barn, the Racoon Hunter's Club and many more. It's good to try new places every week or so. Soon the "bunch" and myself were well acquainted with practically all of the square dance halls in Connecticut. There seems to be a sort of mutual feeling of friendship and comradeship among square dancers and to make friends is one of the easiest things. You don't even have to know how to dance. The other dancers will put you through the figures and have fun doing it! I can still the caller shout "Honors all" and "Allemande Left".

Then it happened! One rainy night the caller at the Racoon Club was delayed and I was elected to call. To be sure I had called the dances to myself many times and also to the fellows and girls on the trip home in the car, but never before a crowd. My knees actually shook at first but after the dances got well under way I didn't mind it. After the first number I rather liked it. It was quite a thrill to watch them all "do-si-do" and "promenade". I was having as much fun as the dancers or maybe more. From then on I started learning as many calls as I could remember. I found that by dancing the figures myself I didn't even have to learn them. Judt automatically learned them by dancing them. As there was a demand for callers I had more than enough work. I've met some of my best friends at square dances. One gets to meeting many people just being behind a mike from three to four nights a week.

From Connecticut my "hog calling" took me to the Adirondaks. Just by chance again .A vacation in the mountains for a week and an offer for a job calling square dances. My week vacation lasted three years! But confidentially it wasn't only the square dances that kept me in the Adirondaks. Fishing was good as was deer hunting forI. would rather fish and hunt than eat. Those trips back into virgin timber are the best memories I have. Have you ever lived in a log cabin sixteen miles from the nearest road? Or eaten flap jacks or sausage at 5 A.M.? Or fished a trout stream where you could catch the "limit" in just a few hours? When I think of these, even square dancing falls into obscurity. But I was always on hand on square dance nights. It is possible to walk sixteen miles in about four and a half to five hours. If one runs once in a while it can be done in four. I made the trip often. one night in a blizzard. One's feet get used to the rocky trails and darkness or distance means nothing.

The square dancers in the Adirondaks like their dances fast, so, in order to keep up with them my tempo had to be stepped up about 75 per cent. Someone once said that liquor and square dancing don't mix. It may be true around these parts but up "north" liquor and dancing seemed to mix well and never any fights.

It was while on a trip down from the mountains that I became acquainted with the American Square Dance Group. It was lucky that I did for look what I would have missed! I certainly am glad I met up with them when I think of all the swell times I've had dancing together with them.

Andy Kmetz

# OH SUSANNAH
(collected by Andy Kmetz in upper New York State)

FORMATION: square set

MUSIC: Oh Susannah

Introduction: Honor your partners, corners, circle left

Calls:

1) First couple out to the right and circle half way round

2) Right and left six in line

3) On to the next and circle four

4) You swing mine and I'll swing yours

5) You swing yours and I'll swing mine

Chorus:

6) Allemande left , grand right and left

7) Swing your partner when you meet her

8) Promenade home

Description:

1) The first couple goes out to the couple on their right and circles four hands half way around

2) The head couple is now facing the second couple. All three couples (one, two and four) are active. One moves between two(Ladies passing left shoulders) then one turns around while four moves between three in the same fashion. While two turns around four is moving between one ans so on until one is facing three.

3) The first couple goes on to the next couple and circle four.

4) Swing your opposite lady

5) Now swing your own.

CHORUS:

6) Left hand to your left hand lady, right to your own, left to the next and so on around the ring till you meet your partner.

7) Swing your partner once around

8) Promenade home.

# OHIO SQUARE DANCE

(collected by Gene Levitt as called by W.A."Billy" Foster, of Delaware County)

FORMATION: square set
MUSIC: any [illegible] good tune
INTRODUCTION:

1) Honor your partners, corners, circle left

2) You're going wrong, go back the other way

3) All eight balance and all eight swing

4) Left hand lady with the lefy hand around
Partners with a right and a grand right and left.

5) Meet your partner and promenade home.

CALLS:

6) First couple balance and first couple swing
Then promenade halfway round the ring.

7) Forward four and back the same
Into the center and there remain.

8) Two and four go right and left, back to place

9) Opposite lady with a left hand, right to your own and promenade.

10) One and three circle four, right and left anf go right home

CHORUS:

11) All eight balance and all eight swing

12) Same as (3)

13) Same as (4) Repeat from (6)

DESCRIPTION:

1) - 5) Needs no explanation

6) The first couple swings. Then promenade halfway round the set until they reach couple three so that the lady of couple one is on the opposite end of the line from gent three.

7) Couples one and three move forward and back in one line. Then forward again and remain in the center.

8) The lady of couple two moves to the right of the line while her partner goes to the left side and the same for couple four coming back the same way.

9) Gent four turns lady two with a left hand while gent two turns lady four with a left hand. They meet their partner. with a right hand and promenade all the way around one and three to place.

10) Couples one and three form a ring and circle until they are facing their own positions and they pass right through to place.

CHORUS:

self-explanatory

## NOTES OF INTEREST

Well, we've loaned another boy to Uncle Sam. This time it's Bob Tunick and the U.S.Navy. Bob's been a member of the Group for a long time and he was one person who always was there when you needed him.

We're going to miss you, Bob, you and your quiet and surprising sense of humor. We'd like to mention in passing that Bob was the only member of the Group to make himself a folk instrument, the ducimer, a rare and diffucult instrument to construct.

So long for a while, Bob. We know that you'll do your part and come back soon for Running Sets and Preakness and all the rest.

Dave Farjeon, one of our boys in North Africa, gave us a real thrill in his last letter. Imagine a fellow all the way out there sending us a money order for seven dollars, writing, " The enclosed is to show you that I am coming back and count me in on membership in the Group"
Well Dave, we really appreciate what you did and we certainly will count on you coming back and dancing with us again.

The big surprise of all came two weeks ago when our black-haired boy, Manny, showed up at Open House. A lthough we had started playparty games we all broke out into a gigantic Running Set and Manny was really calling. He looks swell in a uniform (and a good short hair cut) but we still like him better in a plaid shirt.

A letter from Bobby Simon reads.....

"Just a short note on a day off. I'm at one of the U.S.O.'s in this thriving town of Biloxi and as I was sitting here in the so called music room what should come to my ears but Money Musk and Life on the Ocean Wave and several other of our tunes and dances. They were on records of course, not ours unfortunately but those made by Henry Ford. I know you've heard them so you can see why they made me think of you and the Group."
"By the way, it's now P.F.C. instead of Pvt."

## NATIONAL FOLK FESTIVAL

This year the National Folk Festival will be held in the Academy of Music in Philadelphia. There will be eight performances in all and some " twenty-two states and the Dominion of Canada will be represented" This is the first time the Festival has been held in Phildelphia, although the organization was founded ten years ago. For the past five years the Festival has been presented in Washington, D.C. and this past year it was brought to New York. The Festival will be held from May 5 to May 8 under the leadership of Sarah Gertrude Knott.